| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | *Minorities Welfare* | | | | |
| 1 | Pre-Examination Coaching for Weaker Sections based on Economic Criteria | - | - | 3.34 | 40 | - | - |
| | | | *Welfare of Handicapped* | | | | |
| 1 | Assistance to Vol Orgns for the disabled | 1.29 | 40 | 5.00 | 140 | 5.00 | 127 |

**Funds for Consumer Awareness**

2624 SHRI DINSHA PATEL : Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have made full utilisation of the funds allotted for consumer awareness publicity work during the last three years and 1996-97 so far;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government for optimum utilisation of the funds?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) to (c): Yes, Sir. During the years 1993-94, 1994-95 and 1995-96 the Department of Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution in the Central Government has spent an amount of Rs. 99 lakhs, Rs. 136 lakhs and Rs. 191 lakhs on consumer awareness. In 1996-97, Rs. 42 lakhs has been sanctioned so far for expenditure and the balance amount will be spent during the year.

(d) The Government is already taking a number of measures to utilise these funds. Such measures include preparation of audio/visual mate.ial, printed material in the form of booklets, brochures, posters, etc. in the field of consumer protection. It is also publishing a journal "Upbhokta Jagaran" which disseminates useful information to the consumers.

**Inventory Holding in Super Bazar**

2625 SHRI JANG BAHADUR SINGH PATEL : Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to refer to the answer given to Unstarred Question No. 710 dated November 26, 1996 regarding inventory holding in Super Bazar and state :

(a) the reasons for such high inventory holding in all the Departments and the action proposed to be taken against the officers responsible for disproportionate purchases than the sales;

(b) whether this has exposed the rampant corruption in the purchase Departments of the Super Bazar;

(c) if so, whether there is any proposal to order an intensive inquiry into the working of the Super Bazar;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) According to the information furnished by the Super Bazar, Delhi, there is no high inventory holding in the Departments of the Super Bazar. Procurement of goods is made by their Purchase Committee keeping in view their immediate needs and prospective demand.

(b) Super Bazar has informed that no rampant corruption in their purchase has been exposed.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e): Do not arise.

**Amnesty International**

2626 SHRI HARIN PATHAK : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Amnesty International has made any allegations against India about the tortures made in Jammu and Kashmir and remained silent on the atrocities being committed on the Hindus by the Pak supposed terrorists;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to bring home the facts to the Amnesty International?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR): (a) It is a fact that Amnesty International has, from time to time been, reffering to the Ministry of Home Affairs allegations of human rights violations by security forces

in the State of Jamu and Kashmir. It is also a fact that Amnesty has continued to turn a Nelson's eye to the root cause of the human rights abuses in the State viz. terrorism aided and abetted by Pakistan. It is often found that these allegations are sweeping and generalised in nature and in most of the cases exaggerated and grossly distorted.

(b) and (c) The Government of India have all along firmly denied these allegations. Immediate response to the allegations raised by Amnesty International including factual details of the specific incidents mentioned in their reports are given by the Government through our missions abroad who disseminate the same through press releases and direct contacts. The Government has also consistently been bringing to the notice of the international community the evidence of direct involvement of Pakistan in sponsoring terrorism in the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

**Marine Aquarium**

2627 SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA
SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH
SHRI HARADHAN ROY

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have decided to set up a Marine Acquarium cum Research Centre at Digha West Bengal

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (CAPT. JAI NARAYAN PRASAD NISHAD) : (a) Yes Sir.

(b) The project consists of a Marine Acquarium and a Research Centre. The Research Centre is already operational. The construction of buildings for the Marine Acquarium is also completed. The contract for furnishing the Acquarium is to be executed in 3 stages. The first stage has been completed. The second stage includes collection, transportation, acclimatisation and introduction of marine specimens and the third stage includes training of the designated ZSI Staff members.

**Economic Grant to Sikkim**

2628 SHRI BHIM PRASAD DAHAL: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the reasons for ignoring Sikkim while granting Special Economic Grant to Hill States;

(b) whether a formal request was received by him from the Chief Minister of Sikkim to visit the State; and

(c) if so, the reaction of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA) : (a) The Prime Minister visited all the 7 North-Eastern States between 22-27 October, 1996. At the conclusion of his visit, he announced at Guwahati on 27th October, 1996 a statement on New Initiatives for North Eastern Region. As his visit was limited to only North-Eastern States, the Statement has reference to the N.E. States only.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Question does not arise.

*[Translation]*

**Production Cost of Rice**

2629 SHRI NITISH KUMAR
SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the production cost of rice in India is higher than the other rice producing countries; and

(b) if so, the details of production cost of rice in the country as compared to other countries like Vietnam and Thailand?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) and (b). The costs of production of paddy for different countries are not strictly comparable due to differences in methodologies, the coverage of cost items, the Government interventions and support programmes and selection of appropriate exchange rates. However, the FAO Economic and Social Development Paper 101 titled 'A Comparison of the Cost of Producing Rice in Selected Countries' has presented costs in US$/ton of producing paddy for 1987-89 in respect of a few countries. The report does not include cost of production for India. However, the cost of production of paddy for India, worked out on the same pattern, is lower than that of most of the developed and developing countries in the world except a few countries like Indonesia, Nepal, Thailand and Philippines. The country wise position is as under :

| Country | Cost (US$/Ton) |
|---|---|
| India | 135 |
| Thailand | 98 |
| Philippines | 124 |
| Nepal | 96 |
| Indonesia | 82 |
| Republic of Korea | 939 |
| Japan | 1987 |
| U.S.A. | 195 |